What the Employers of America can do for the Disabled Soldiers & Sailors

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TO THE EMPLOYERS OF AMERICA.

Not an Appeal for Charity! But a Straight Business Talk on How All Employers Can Aid Uncle Sam in the Training and Employment of Disabled Soldiers and Sailors.

With the coming of peace every patriotic citizen who has been thrilled with the achievements of our American soldiers "over there" wonders how this great country, with all of its resources and its deep sense of gratitude, can best repay the debt which it owes to those who have borne the brunt of battle.

This debt is one common to all our citizenship, and one which all of us must help to pay in one way or another.

The great American Congress felt the pulse of the Nation. It has charged the Federal Board for Vocational Education with the specific task of reeducating, retraining all disabled soldiers and sailors to take their place in the world as independent, self-supporting citizens. **YOU, the employers of America, are charged with the duty of cooperation.**

The boys are coming now. You must not—**WE WILL NOT**—fail **our boys** and **our country** in this great task!

WHAT SHOULD THE EMPLOYER DO FOR THE DISABLED SOLDIER AND SAILOR?

Charity is not needed. For the first time in the history of this or any other nation, Uncle Sam has put his war pensions on a proper basis as an insurance obligation. Expensive preparations have been made for taking care of the disabled boys, not as beggars but as self-respecting men. This is a substantial return in gratitude. However, the best return the country can make for the service these injured men have rendered is to give them their opportunity to perform, in the years after the war, the same quality of national service they have rendered during the war. **In this work the help of the employer is indispensable.** The boys are eager to get back into civil life. **YOU** should be just as eager to help them realize their eagerness. **The Federal Board calls upon every employer to aid in the intelligent discharge of this task.** The only way these disabled men can perform that continued service to the Nation which they have rendered on the battle field is as able and efficient workers.

REMADE PHYSICALLY (AS FAR AS POSSIBLE) AND REMADE TO TAKE THEIR PLACE IN INDUSTRIAL, COMMERCIAL, AGRICULTURAL, OR PROFESSIONAL WORLD.

The Surgeon General's office is making those disabled in war as whole again physically as they can be made. Then, instead of turning them out to shift for themselves, the Government, through the Federal Board, and with the cooperation of all employers, will get these men back into civilian employment. The Federal Board will train them to give effective and efficient service as workers in agriculture, industry, commerce, or the professions. In spite of their handicaps these men will be trained to fill their jobs as well as those who have not stood the brunt of war.

Further, the Federal Board will see that these men are reemployed; that they MAKE GOOD; and that they receive a square deal.

"What Job Will I Get When I Have Finished This Training Stunt?"

This is the first question that a handicapped man offered this opportunity asks. The trouble with most education is that the educatee—if one may coin the word—does not see whither the training leads. He insists upon seeing where he is going; and he usually wastes no time in being educated for a job unless he can spot the job itself and can be persuaded that the only right road to the job is through a direct, concrete course of training such as those prescribed by the Federal Board.

For this reason the Board must be able to point the training toward a specific occupation waiting for the man when he is industrially fit. It must be an occupation in which he will be kept not on a charity basis, but because he can make good. He must have the satisfaction of feeling that, handicapped though he may be in body, he is doing a man's work.

EMPLOYERS' COOPERATION.

Consequently the keystone of this carefully considered plan of the Government for rehabilitating the injured soldiers and sailors is the hearty, intelligent, and untiring cooperation of employers throughout the whole United States. The farmers must take back every farmer boy who wants to return to the land and as many more of the disabled soldiers and sailors as can be induced and can be adequately trained to take up this industry.

Industries, large and small, must make a careful inventory to see where and how they can use properly trained, disabled men in real man-sized jobs. The merchants must reckon how far it is safe, from every point of view, for them to use in selling, buying, and account-

ing men with this or that physical handicap. Especially must those professions and those occupations which are largely administrative in character give every proper chance to those disabled men who, through education secured before and after the war, are competent to undertake intellectual responsibilities. It is a truism, of course, that the more a man can use his head in earning a living the less will be the handicap due to a body more or less below par.

Consider the Employment of These Men from Strictly Business Viewpoint.

Scarcely an employer in the United States but will welcome the chance to show in a concrete way his appreciation of what these injured men have done for the country and for him as one of its citizens. But that grateful employer will do the injured man and society an ill service if he lets his heart run away with his head. He wants to be generous, of course; but he mustn't be so at the expense of his business, of his normal employees, and of the general good. Above all, he mustn't try to get a reputation for public spirit by taking on handicapped men for whom he has no real jobs that will keep real and dependable through bad times as well as good. Consequently, before any employer, in his natural desire to show his patriotism by giving these returning soldiers a helping hand, commits himself to a program for reemploying his own disabled men or for taking on new men injured in the service, it is imperative that he look the thing squarely in the face and study this problem of using handicapped soldiers in his particular establishment in the clear light of questions such as these:

Is every job that I am offering one that a handicapped man can perform with real efficiency and without undue strain upon his reduced vitality?

Is the job one that, if he is properly trained and proves competent, the disabled man can hold even when it is necessary, through slack business, to lay a part of the force off?

Am I going to give this man a square deal all the way through, or am I going to let myself be influenced, when it comes to the matter of promotions, etc., by the fact that a handicapped employee is less able than a normal one to hustle for another job?

Is my willingness to give him a man's chance dictated by the desire to help, or have I a lurking feeling that if I employ a considerable number of handicapped men at a reduced wage I can get, under the guise of patriotism, a few inches ahead of my competitors?

And, finally, and most important of all, am I going into this scheme of employing handicapped men on the only basis upon which it can succeed—that of business "horse sense" which realizes that,

by the full and wise utilization of handicapped labor on a footing that is as fair to business as it is to the injured man, industry as a whole will be a great gainer and a source of national strength that otherwise would be wasted is fully and steadily used?

Only after an employer has asked himself these questions and has answered them to the full satisfaction of himself and of those who are immediately concerned in getting the handicapped man back into the industrial, commercial, or professional world is he really ready to consider the details as to just where the disabled soldier or sailor can be employed.

It is on this sound basis of understanding and agreement that the Federal Board for Vocational Education purposes to carry forward its work of placement. It hopes that every employer to whom its agents go, seeking chances for handicapped men, will look at the question from this broad viewpoint rather than from the somewhat hysterical attitude of indiscriminate philanthrophy. Furthermore, this is a time when employers should look ahead to the employment problems of the future.

MEN WILL BE TRAINED TO MAKE GOOD.

There are few men so handicapped by maiming or disease that, given proper training for a suitable occupation, they can not make good. The Federal Government will provide the proper training; during its full period the man and his dependents will be adequately supported. No job will be asked for on any ground except that of the man's efficiency. If he does not make good he will be taken away and, if possible, trained for something else. That is the Government's side of the proposed plan of cooperation. The other side rests in the hands of the employing public; and the whole sensible scheme will fall to the ground unless every employer appreciates the fact that it is up to him to give these men who have been injured in his behalf a fair chance, a reasonable time to make good, a friendly hand up, and a square deal; that is to say, a four-square deal, in which the interests of the man, of the employer, of the labor market, and of society in general all get an equal show.

JUST HOW DOES THE FEDERAL BOARD PROPOSE TO DISCHARGE ITS DUTIES AS ONE SIDE OF THE SQUARE?

In dealing with the disabled man the Board expects to treat him throughout as a civilian needing advice and assistance; to approve his choice of occupation unless, after careful investigation, sound opinion shows it to be inadvisable; to train him to meet the needs of the occupation he has elected; to urge him to make the most of

his opportunity to overcome his handicap by taking thoroughgoing instructions; to help him to secure desirable permanent employment; and to keep in close touch with him after he goes to work.

As soon as the military authorities have decided that any disabled man is to be discharged from the hospital and returned to civilian life, it becomes the duty of the Federal Board, through its Vocational Advisers in hospitals, to deal with the problem of training him and of placing him in civilian employment. This task involves five possible steps:

(*a*) Election by the disabled man of a course of training.
(*b*) Preliminary training to fit him for a definite occupation or pursuit.
(*c*) A probationary period of employment in that occupation or pursuit.
(*d*) Placement in suitable employment in the occupation or pursuit.
(*e*) Follow-up work to safeguard his interests.

Election by the Disabled Man of a Course of Training.

Representatives of the Federal Board will confer with each disabled man before his discharge from the hospital. If he is able to resume his former occupation successfully, or to follow some new occupation without special training, the Federal Board will assist him, if he so desires, to secure employment therein. Should he elect, even under these circumstances, to take additional training for his occupation before he enters upon employment, the law provides that he may do so at the expense of the Government, under conditions determined by the Federal Board. If, however, he is unable to pursue his old occupation or to enter successfully upon a new occupation, he may be trained by the Federal Board for any vocation or pursuit that he desires to follow and in which, in the opinion of the Board, he is likely to become proficient.

In advising as to future employment, representatives of the Board have equipped themselves with information concerning the requirements and opportunities of the various occupations. Much of this information is furnished to the men in printed form. The representatives are informed concerning the kinds of occupations from which certain types of handicap are shut out.

Every effort is being made to assist the disabled man toward that occupation in which he is most interested and for which, because of his aptitude and experience on the one hand and his handicap on the other, he is best suited. In order to utilize previous knowledge and skill, the disabled man is advised—other things being equal—to elect

training, should he need it, for the industry, business, or pursuit in which he was engaged before the war, or for one akin to it.

As a general policy, a handicapped man is not directed toward an overcrowded or a waning occupation in which present or future competition might make permanent employment uncertain. In order, however, to realize fully upon the man's interest and ability, he is given the widest possible range of choice among those desirable occupations in which, in the light of the best medical and vocational knowledge available, he can, with his special handicap, successfully engage. In this connection the Board seeks advice from those experts in the hospitals who have effected the man's physical rehabilitation.

The disabled man, with the approval of the Board, may elect to be trained in agriculture, commerce, industry, transportation, or the professions. The length and character of the course of instruction depends upon the requirements of the vocation, the ability and interest of the man, and his previous training and experience.

After the Vocational Adviser has assisted the handicapped man to choose a suitable occupation, his case, with full information, is referred to the office of the district wherein the man has received physical rehabilitation. Every case is there considered individually on its merits by a local board made up of two representatives chosen from the locality, one of whom is an employer and one a representative of labor. If necessary, the man himself, accompanied by the Vocational Adviser, may appear before the local board.

Preliminary Training Fitting Him for a Definite Occupation or Pursuit.

After physical rehabilitation the discharged soldier or sailor becomes a civilian to be trained for and placed in civilian employment by the Federal Board. As a student he is supported by the Government, and the same allotment and family allowance for his dependents is paid as were received by them while he was in the military service. As a student, moreover, he has the same freedom as any other civilian attending school or college. He is "on his own," meeting such expenses as are not covered by the Board from the compensation provided in the Vocational Rehabilitation Act, and sent monthly or semimonthly direct to him.

Through the District Vocational Office, where a medical officer is stationed, the health of the disabled man is cared for while in training by the Board. After he secures permanent employment he, as a beneficiary under the War-Risk Insurance Act, will be cared for by the War-Risk Insurance Bureau should there be any recurrence of disabilities due to military service.

As a student supported by the Government while taking instruction, the disabled man is expected to pursue the work in a satisfactory way and to obey reasonable rules and regulations. Continued failure to do so would result in dismissal. Where it is found advisable to shift the student from one course of training or from one class or school to another, this, with his consent, is done.

The disabled man is given his preliminary training in a variety of ways. As far as possible existing facilities are utilized. While the plant, equipment, and staff of existing schools and colleges in many instances is used, there must be in many cases special arrangements to meet the needs of the disabled man. Manufacturing establishments, offices, and farms are employed to give preliminary training. In every case, however, the Federal Board requires the course of instruction to be adapted to the interests and needs of the disabled man, definitely planned for him as a learner and arranged or approved, as well as inspected and supervised, by its agents.

The length of this course of preliminary training varies greatly according to the ability, ambition, and handicaps of the man and the requirements of the work itself or to the skill and knowledge required for present and future success.

A Probationary Period of Employment in the Occupation or Pursuit.

In assisting the disabled man to secure desirable employment the Federal Board, as authorized and directed by the Vocational Rehabilitation Act, will utilize as far as may be practicable the facilities of the Department of Labor. Where the man has been given preliminary training outside the plant, office, or farm on which he is to be employed, this probationary period begins when he is transferred, as a beginner, into the occupation or pursuit. Where the preliminary training has been given within the plant, office, or farm the period of probation starts at the point, in the case of each individual, where he becomes capable of entering upon the occupation or pursuit as a worker.

As a probationer he will be perfecting himself in processes, adjusting himself to the demands of commercial production. He will be gradually fitting himself to become a permanent employee at the prevailing wage, either in the place where he is serving his probationary period or elsewhere. During this period the Federal Board will regard him as in training and subject to its inspection and supervision, but any wages he may receive as a probationer will be over and above the amount paid to him by the Government while he is in training.

Permanent Employment in the Occupation or Pursuit.

This begins at the point when, in the opinion of the Board, the probationer has adjusted himself to the requirements of the occupation or pursuit as a workman. The shifting from probationary to permanent employment may be made in either the same or another establishment, and the disabled man has the same freedom of choice and action as any other workman "on his own." Support by the Government of the man as a student will cease at the close of the probationary period.

As a beneficiary under the War-Risk Insurance Act, however, he will be entitled to the compensation allotted under that act. In most cases this will be less than the support received from the Federal Board under the provisions of the Vocational Rehabilitation Act.

The aim of the Board is always to direct the disabled men toward and to provide him with training for an occupation in which he can become as proficient as the normal man. Yet it must not be overlooked that some of the disabled men will not become fully competent to earn the prevailing wage. Therefore, where a disabled man is unable, because of his handicap, to earn the full prevailing wage for his occupation, an adjustment, in accordance with the rules and regulations of the shop, is to be made. Where working agreements are in effect between employers and employees, the regulations thereof shall govern the procedure in adjusting such partial wages. Where there are no such facilities, the adjustment is to be made by conference between the man, his employer, and a representative of the Federal Board. It should be fully understood that the disabled man himself, as a free contracting agent, may in every case accept or reject any terms or scale proposed.

The disabled man should, however, receive equal pay for equal work, and under no circumstances will a wage for a disabled man be approved by the Federal Board where it appears that decreases have been made because he is receiving a compensation for his injury from the Government.

Follow-Up Work to Safeguard Interests of the Man.

As the official friend and adviser to the disabled man, the Board will keep in touch with him, through its representatives, for such period after he enters employment as may be necessary to complete, in each individual case, his reestablishment as a civilian worker. The Board will protect him against injustice or exploitation by the adjustment of difficulties, and, if need be, by aiding him through further training or assistance to secure other and more desirable employment in the same or another occupation.

WHAT STEPS SHALL YOU, AS AN EMPLOYER, TAKE TO DO YOUR PART IN THIS PROGRAM OF VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION?

You should write at once either to the Central Office of the Federal Board at Washington, D. C., or to the District Office of the Federal Board for the district in which you are located. You will find at the end of this little pamphlet the addresses of the Federal Board and district office for your district.

Tell us about your business. Give us a description of the employment your plant or office or farm offers. Let us give you the opportunity to cooperate in the great task of remaking our disabled soldiers and sailors.

The boys are coming now! Not only a few, but hundreds of them.

Act quickly!

Write NOW!

All employers and others interested in the employment or training and employment of disabled soldiers and sailors, or desiring to help in any way in the work, should address their communications either to the Federal Board for Vocational Education, Washington, D. C., or to the District Office of the Federal Board in which the correspondent resides. Information concerning these districts and their respective offices follows:

District No. 1.—Maine, Vermont, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, and Rhode Island. Office, Room 433, Tremont Building, Boston, Mass.

District No. 2.—Connecticut, New York, and New Jersey. Office, Room 711, 280 Broadway, New York.

District No. 3.—Pennsylvania and Delaware. Office, 1000 Penn Square Building, Philadelphia, Pa.

District No. 4.—District of Columbia, Maryland, Virginia, and West Virginia. Office, 606 F Street NW., Washington, D. C.

District No. 5.—North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, and Florida. Office, Candler Building, Atlanta, Ga.

District No. 6.—Alabama, Mississippi, and Louisiana. Office, 822 Maison Blanche Annex, New Orleans, La.

District No. 7.—Ohio, Indiana, and Kentucky. Office, 906 Mercantile Library Building, Cincinnati, Ohio.

District No. 8.—Michigan, Illinois, and Wisconsin. Office, Chicago, Ill.

District No. 9.—Iowa, Nebraska, Kansas, and Missouri. Office, 517 Chemical Building, St. Louis, Mo.

District No. 10.—Minnesota, North Dakota, and South Dakota. Office, Room 742, Metropolitan Bank Building, Minneapolis, Minn.

District No. 11.—Wyoming, Colorado, New Mexico, and Utah. Office, 909 Seventeenth Street, Denver, Colo.

District No. 12.—California, Nevada, and Arizona. Office, San Francisco, Cal.

District No. 13.—Montana, Idaho, Oregon, and Washington. Office, Seattle, Wash.

District No. 14.—Arkansas, Oklahoma, and Texas. Office, Dallas, Tex.

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